Common Questions Regarding Michigan's Public Reporting of its Special Education and Early Intervention Services State Performance Plans

1. **Why are these data being released to the public?**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 2004 requires states to report annually to the public on the performance of each Local Education Agency and service area located in the State on the targets in the State's Performance Plan. § 300.602(b)(1)(i)(A). The specific indicators for public reporting are required by the United States Department of Education (USED), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

2. **What are the sources of the data?**

Local and Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) submitted data through a variety of systems: the Single Record Student Database (SRSD), the December 1 Special Education and *Early On®* federal counts through Michigan Compliance Information System (MI-CIS), verification processes, and surveys.

The Office of Educational Assessment & Accountability (OEAA) provided state assessment data.

3. **Are these data current?**

Data reflect the 2006-2007 school year as federally required.

On February 1, 2008, the USED, Office of Special Education Programs collected each state's Annual Performance Report (APR). The APR summarized the 2006-2007 performance on State Performance Plan indicator targets. The current public reporting summarizes local school district performance on many of those indicators as required.

4. **Why does data not show for some districts?**

When a district has fewer than 10 students in a subgroup, the individual information is considered personally identifiable, and therefore is not reported. Small group size is also noted on other Indicators by an asterisk (*). This is in alignment with federal confidentiality requirements.

In addition, there may not be a sufficient number of students with disabilities to calculate data for that district as required by the specific indicator (e.g. Indicator 3 "Measurable Group- No").

5. **Why might some of the data differ from that seen on other state reports?**

The public reporting data reflect specific snapshots from one point in time as prescribed under the IDEA. Data also are compiled according to specific requirements from the USED Office of Special Education Programs for students with disabilities, which may differ from the requirements for other offices.

6. Can my district's data be amended?

The 2006-2007 data sets are final. When the data were originally being prepared for submission, districts had opportunities to verify the accuracy.

7. How can data errors be avoided?

Technical assistance and oversight for general education and special education administrators and data entry personnel can result in improved accuracy in meeting reporting requirements. State and ISD personnel can assist in accomplishing these tasks.

8. What is the impact on the data when one district operates programs that include children and youth from other communities?

Consistent with the practices of Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), most data are reported relative to the **operating district.** Disproportionate Representation (Indicators 9 & 10) may also consider resident district data. Some districts host programs that include children and youth from neighboring districts in separate facilities, which might include special education schools, alternative schools, magnet schools, etc. This may affect results on some indicators such as graduation, assessment, or educational settings.

9. Why does Special Education Indicator 12 (Preschool Transition) report "NA" for all districts in my ISD?

The USED approved a sampling plan for this indicator. One-third (1/3) of the ISDs were sampled for this Indicator during the 2005-2006 school year. A different third have been sampled for the 2006-2007 school year.

Also, many early childhood and preschool programs are operated by an ISD rather than by local school districts. Even in sampled ISDs, the report will only be available for the operating district.

10. How can this public reporting data be used?

Identify areas where your district is doing well. Those successes are important to recognize and maintain. Then in areas where improvement is needed, analyze patterns in practices, procedures, and policies that may interfere with progress among children and youth with disabilities. Data can be used for planning the changes necessary to achieve the desired growth and for monitoring the progress toward established goals.